

Commissioner's Weekly Field Memo
Friday, July 1, 2016

Notes from Commissioner Wagner

1. Draft [Secondary Regulations](#) posted for public comment
2. Empowerment schools [next steps](#)

From the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE)

Educators:

3. *Final Reminder:* New guidance documents posted on evaluations; all LEAs must [submit educator-evaluation data](#) to RIDE by **July 8**
4. *Reminder:* RIDE adds second training for new evaluators; [evaluator-training academy](#) to be offered **September 30 and October 1**

Assessments:

5. RIDE provides [FAQ document](#) on the 2016-2017 administration of PSAT/NMSQT and SAT

Finance:

6. RIDE posts [Fiscal Year 2017](#) aid entitlements, payment schedules
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Action Item Calendar

July 8 – [Evaluation](#) data due (see [below](#))
July 15 – [Housing Aid](#) applications due
July 15 – [Physical-restraint](#) data due
August 1 – Fast-Track [Repair Program](#) intent letter
August 19 – [School Bus Monitor Variance](#) requests due

Notes from Commissioner Wagner

1. Draft Secondary Regulations posted for public comment

The current draft of Secondary School Regulations, which were presented to and approved by the Council on May 17, 2016, is now undergoing the formal process for recording public comment, which will be open through September 15, 2016.

All interested parties are invited to participate in the public hearings and submit written comments concerning the proposed regulations from July 1, 2016 – September 15, 2016.

The draft Secondary School Regulations and other supporting documents can be found at:

www.ride.ri.gov/DiplomaSystem

Four public hearings on the proposed draft regulations will be held on:

- **Monday, August 22, 2016 at 5:30pm:** Cumberland Public Library, Rooms 1 & 2, Hayden Center; 1464 Diamond Hill Road, Cumberland, RI 02864
- **Monday, August 29, 2016 at 5:30pm:** Newport Public Library, Program Room, Lower Level; 300 Spring Street, Newport, RI 02840
- **Tuesday, September 6, 2016 at 5:30pm:** Warwick Public Library, Room 101, Large Meeting Room; 600 Sandy Lane, Warwick, RI 02889
- **Monday, September 12, 2016 at 5:30pm:** University of Rhode Island, Providence Campus, Room 501; 80 Washington Street, Providence, RI 02903

The hearing locations are accessible to the disabled and interpreter services for the hearing impaired will be provided if requested 48 hours prior to the hearing. Requests for this service can be made in writing or by calling Sonya Barbosa at 401-222-8463 or RI Relay 1-800-745-5555.

Written comments may be submitted to Sonya Barbosa at the RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 255 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903, or at Secondary@ride.ri.gov or by faxing 401-222-6178.

2. Empowerment schools next steps

The 2016 General Assembly enacted the [School and Family Empowerment Act \(Chapter 3.2 in Article 11\)](#) rooted in the belief that if we are going to help all of our children reach their full potential, it will be because we empower the educators closest to

students. The Empowerment Act provides educators and community leaders the voluntary opportunity to reimagine and implement their vision for an excellent school by taking advantage of unprecedented levels of school-based autonomy and regulatory flexibility.

Later this summer, RIDE will release detailed information on the process and next steps regarding how districts and educators can volunteer to become an empowerment school. In addition, RIDE will release information about grant opportunities that will provide leadership development opportunities for educators interested in developing and leading an empowerment school.

Interested in leading an empowerment school? Have a vision for an empowerment school that will provide an excellent, innovative education to Rhode Island's students? Please let RIDE know through the following link (tinyurl.com/riempowermentschools). We will follow up with you shortly to learn more about your vision and to share opportunities to participate in communities of practice with likeminded leaders.

From RIDE

Educators:

3. *Final Reminder:* New guidance documents posted on evaluations; all LEAs must submit educator-evaluation data to RIDE by July 8

For LEAs using the Educator Performance and Support System (EPSS), the Final Effectiveness Rating Report (FERR) has changed since last year. Evaluators and LEA administrators should click the

link labeled “*EPSS Closeout and Turnover*” on the EPSS page to review updated instructions on how to complete the FERR. Please note that evaluators must submit an FERR for *all* educators, including those who did not receive a full evaluation this year. LEAs *must* finalize their forms in EPSS by **July 8**.

For LEAs *not* using EPSS, some of the fields have changed since last year to reflect changes to some systems. Data managers and LEA configuration administrators should review the updated *Evaluation Data Submission Guidance* document, which provides details on how to submit data via CSV file. These LEAs have until **July 8** to upload educator-evaluation data.

All documents related to educator-evaluation closeout have been posted on the [EPSS page](#) of the RIDE website under the heading “End of Year Information.”

Please e-mail edeval@ride.ri.gov if you have any questions about submitting educator-evaluation data to RIDE or if you would like additional support.

4. *Reminder:* RIDE adds second training for new evaluators; evaluator-training academy to be offered September 30 and October 1

All new evaluators using the Rhode Island Model in the coming school year (2016-17) are required to successfully complete training. Previously, this training was a four-day training prior to the start of the school year. In order to better reflect best practice, we have changed the format and timing of the training. As part of this new training sequence, participants will engage in pre-work on their own; attend a two-day in-person academy in

the summer or fall; receive coaching as needed throughout the year; and then attend a one-day, in-person training in the spring.

The first part of the training sequence, the two-day academy, will be held at RIDE (80 Washington St./255 Westminster St., Providence), in Room 444, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., on **September 30 and October 1**. The academy will prepare personnel evaluating teachers and support professionals to accurately observe and rate practice, lead professional feedback conversations, approve student learning or outcome objectives, and use the Educator Performance and Support System. Attendance is required on both days, and about an hour of pre-work is required prior to the academy. Lunch will be provided both days. Register on Eventbrite, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/RIM-Fall>

or

<http://ridefall.eventbrite.com>

Assessments:

5. RIDE provides FAQ document on the 2016-2017 administration of PSAT/NMSQT and SAT

On Friday, June 24th, 2016 Governor Raimondo signed into the law the 2017 state budget bill that allows Rhode Island public school *sophomores* to take the PSAT/NMSQT and Rhode Island public school *juniors* to take the SAT for free and during the school day. Over the next few months, RIDE will be providing more detailed information on the PSAT/NMSQT and SAT administration in the 2016-2017 school year. In the interim, key information and next steps for districts and schools to consider if they would like

to participate in this opportunity can be found [online](#) in a helpful FAQ [document](#).

For more information about the PSAT/NMSQT or the SAT, please visit <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/>. If you have any additional questions, please send them to kevon.tucker-seeley@ride.ri.gov.

Finance:

6. RIDE posts Fiscal Year 2017 aid entitlements, payment schedules

The final Fiscal Year 2017 education-aid entitlements and payment schedules are now posted on the RIDE website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/FundingFinance/FundingSources/StateEducationAid.aspx>

Preliminary local aid payment rates for charter schools, Davies, and Met pursuant to RIGL 16-7.2-5(c) have also been posted at the above link. Please note that these rates were calculated using FY 2014 data and **will change** once the audited data is available for FY 2015. Contact Kristen Cole, in our Finance Office, at Kristen.Cole@ride.ri.gov, if you have questions about the aid entitlements or local payment rates.

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/FieldMemos.aspx>